

Message Text

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ACTION PC-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 ISO-00 /019 W
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R 020913Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0058

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 7918

FOR PC-DELLENBACK AND AF BUREAU FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AFSP OGEN

SUBJECT: PEACE CORPS IN ETHIOPIA

REF: STATE 163280

1. APPRECIATE YOUR TELEGRAM REFTEL.

2. FROM MY PERSPECTIVE, PC/WASH IN CANCELLING FIVE PCV'S ALREADY RECRUITED AND ON BOARD IS US HAS TAKEN DECISION THAT ENTIRELY CHANGES PAST ASSUMPTIONS. PREVIOUSLY, IT HAD BEEN AGREED THAT SECURITY OF PCV'S WAS PARAMOUNT CONSIDERATION, AND THAT CONDITIONS OF ASSIGNMENT WOULD BE CAREFULLY SCRUTINIZED ON CASE BY CASE BASIS. NOW CANCELLATION OF FIVE NEW PCV'S, ALL OF WHOSE ASSIGNMENTS HAD BEEN GIVEN SUCH SCRUTINY AND ALL OF WHICH WOULD HAVE BEEN IN SECURE ENVIRONMENT, SHOWS THAT A NEW KIND OF DECISION HAS BEEN REACHED. AS YOUR MESSAGE SAYS, QUOTE PC HAS DETERMINED IT INAPPROPRIATE AT THIS TIME TO PUT ANY ADDITIONAL VOLUNTEERS INTO THE ETHIOPIAN PROGRAM. UNQUOTE IN EFFECT YOU HAVE DECLARED WHOLE COUNTRY OF ETHIOPIA A DANGER AREA, A DECISION THAT SIMPLY DOES NOT ACCORD WITH THE FACTS. HUNDREDS OF MISSIONARIES AND TECHNICAL EXPERTS LIVE AND WORK IN ETHIOPIAN COUNTRYSIDE. THOUSANDS OF FOREIGN FAMILIES, INCLUDING AMERICANS, LIVE AND WORK IN ADDIS. PC/WASH, OVER EMBASSY OBJECTIONS, SEEMS TO THINK PCV'S ARE ALL IN UNIQUELY HAZARDOUS SITUATIONS.

3. I HOPE YOU HAVE THOUGHT THROUGH THE IMPLICATIONS FOR
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PRESENT PCV'S NOW IN ETHIOPIA, AND ALSO HOW SUCH A DECISION

SQUARES WITH PC INTENTION NOT TO CLOSE THE ETHIOPIA PROGRAM.

4. YOUR MESSAGE SPEAKS OF HOPE THAT "WHEN SECURITY ISSUE IS RESOLVED" AN INCREASE IN PCV'S CAN OCCUR. SECURITY PROBLEMS, HOWEVER, HAVE BEEN ENDEMIC IN ETHIOPIA FOR MANY YEARS AND I AM UNABLE TO SAY WHEN SECURITY SITUATION IN PARTS OF ETHIOPIA WILL CHANGE FOR THE BETTER. DESPITE SUCH PROBLEMS, WE HAVE SUCCESSFULLY CARRIED OUT A VARIETY OF PROGRAMS WITHOUT ENDANGERING PERSONNEL. I THINK IT ONLY LOGICAL TO POINT OUT THAT "SECURITY ISSUE" PRESENTLY BEING RAISED IS ESSENTIALLY ISSUE OF PC/WASH ACTIONS. THE ONLY ADVICE I CAN GIVE IS THAT PC/WASH SHOULD ABANDON ILLOGICAL BLANKET BAN AND RETURN TO SOBER EXAMINATION OF INDIVIDUAL PCV SECURITY SITUATIONS, AS RESULT OF WHICH SOME PCV'S COULD CONTINUE TO BE ASSIGNED TO ETHIOPIA IN SAFE ENVIRONMENTS.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 JUL 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ullricre
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976ADDIS07918
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760258-0002
From: ADDIS ABABA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760797/aaaadhjz.tel
Line Count: 77
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION PC
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Reference: 76 STATE 163280
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ullricre
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <28 JUN 2004 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <02 NOV 2004 by ullricre>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PEACE CORPS IN ETHIOPIA
TAGS: AFSP, OGEN
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006